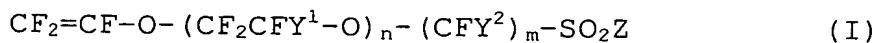


ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to a method of producing the fluoropolymer according to any one of Claims 1 to 3, by subjecting a fluoropolymer precursor containing acid/acid salt groups and having $-\text{CF}_2\text{COOX}$ groups at polymer chain terminals, in the formula X represents H, $\text{NR}^{11}\text{R}^{12}\text{R}^{13}\text{R}^{14}$ or $\text{M}^4_{1/L}$; R^{11} , R^{12} , R^{13} and R^{14} are the same or different and each represents H or an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms and M^4 represents a metal having a valence of L, said metal having a valence of L being a metal belonging to the group 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12 or 13 of the long-form periodic table, to heat treatment for the conversion of said $-\text{CF}_2\text{COOX}$ groups to $-\text{CF}_2\text{H}$ groups, X being as defined above,

wherein said fluoropolymer precursor is one obtained by polymerizing a perhalovinyl ether derivative represented by the general formula (I):



wherein Y^1 represents F, Cl or a perfluoroalkyl group, n represents an integer of 0 to 3, the n atoms/groups of Y^1 are the same or different, Y^2 represents F or Cl, m represents an integer of 1 to 5, the m atoms of Y^2 are the same or different and Z represents F, Cl, Br, I, $-\text{OM}^5_{1/L}$ or $-\text{ONR}^{15}\text{R}^{16}\text{R}^{17}\text{R}^{18}$; M^5 represents a metal having a valence of L and the metal having a valence of L is as defined above, and R^{15} , R^{16} , R^{17} and R^{18} are the same or different and each represents H or an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms,

when the group $-\text{SO}_2\text{Z}$ in the general formula (I) is not said acid/acid salt group but is a group convertible to such acid/acid salt group, said fluoropolymer precursor is one subjected to a conversion treatment, after the above-mentioned polymerization, for the conversion of said group $-\text{SO}_2\text{Z}$ to the above-mentioned acid/acid salt group, and

said heat treatment comprises heating said fluoropolymer precursor at 120 to 400°C.